



# SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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## Concerns and Celebrations



**Larry Calbert** has announced that he celebrates his 20th anniversary as pastor of **Rush Memorial Congregational UCC**, Atlanta, this month. Over the course of this ministry Larry has served in a number of leadership positions, including chair of the Association Church and Ministry Committee, and moderator of the association. Larry currently serves on the Disaster Assistance Relief Team (DART) of the Southeast Conference, covering the states of Georgia and South Carolina.

**Central Congregational UCC, Atlanta**, welcomes its new senior pastor **S. Michael Pater**, who began on January 12th. Michael arrives from Iowa. He serves on the Board of Directors of Local Church Ministries a covenanted ministry of the United Church of Christ.

**Diantha Brown** begins her service as pastor of **First United Church of Christ, Belvidere**, TN this month, following recuperation from back surgery. She is a resident of Pleasant Hill, TN.

**Jeremy Rich** was installed as pastor of **Bethany Congregational UCC**, Thomasville, GA on January 11th. Jeremy is a teacher in the Thomasville schools, and recently moved to Thomasville from Florida. Representing the Conference at the service of installation were Associate Conference Minister **Kathy Clark**, and Conference Minister **Tim Downs**. Representing the Georgia South Carolina Association and preaching for the occasion was **Larry Calbert**, pastor of Rush Memorial UCC, Atlanta.

**Gregg Carlson**, member of **Pilgrimage UCC**, Marietta, GA, and an ordained minister of the Free Methodist Church of N.A., was granted privilege of call by the Georgia-South Carolina Association on January 6th. Gregg is currently serving as the director of operations of the Unity Church North Atlanta, and is seeking a call in the UCC.

A Four Way Covenant Service of Installation for **Robin Lee Fitch**, member of **Central Congregational UCC**, Atlanta, has been scheduled for 4:30 at Central on **Sunday March 1st**. All clergy and leaders of the Georgia-South Carolina Association are encouraged to be present. Robin Lee is called by the Conference to a ministry in private therapy practice.

**Tom Mozley**, member of Central Congregational UCC, Atlanta, APC Certified Chaplain, who recently served at the VA Hospital in Decatur, GA, was granted a leave of absence from ministry January 6th

**Ted Brelsford**, member of **Central Congregational UCC**, Atlanta, and visiting professor at Candler School of Theology, continues to pursue ordination in the UCC through the Georgia-South Carolina Association, having been called to Orchard Park Community Church, outside of Syracuse, NY.



**Elise Elrod**, member of **Holy Trinity Community UCC**, Nashville, ordained Southern Baptist, and granted privilege of call by the Alabama-Tennessee Association in September, 2008, has completed a field placement at Holy Trinity, Nashville, and continues to seek a call in the UCC.

We received word that **Lillian Hallstrand**, member of **Brookmeade Congregational UCC**, Nashville, and a student in care enrolled in Vanderbilt School of Divinity, was married December 22nd, and is now Lillian Hallstrand Strahine. Congratulations!

We were saddened to receive word of the death of the oldest sister of **Ann Schoup** in Pennsylvania the second week of January. Ann is a member of Pleasant Hill Community UCC, and a member of the Conference personnel committee.

We received word that **Ronnie Galvin**, recently called to serve as minister for youth at



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**First Congregational UCC, Atlanta**, recovered “perfectly” from complicated surgery with an excellent prognosis. Ronnie was operated on at a clinic in Detroit.

Christmas evening, Conference moderator, **Vanessa Robbs** and her mother fled a fire in their home with their pets. They anticipate being able to move back in two to three months, and are grateful to be well and safe.

Conference Minister **Tim Downs** continues to recuperate from surgery December 17th. He is back to work on a reduced schedule through January and doing very well. He is grateful for the many prayers and good wishes.

**Tom Eckert** announced that December 28th was his last Sunday as part-time pastor of **United Church UCC Cookeville**, TN where he had served for 5 ½ years. This marks the end of 57 years of worship leadership over the course of a long and remarkable ministry. Tom had served as interim minister at Fairfield Glade Community Church, TN, some years ago. United Church Cookeville is close to calling a full-time pastor following a lengthy search.

**Candace Chellew Hodges**, associate pastor at **Garden of Grace UCC**, Columbia, SC, announced that her recently published book “Bulletproof Faith: A spiritual Survival Guide for Gay and Lesbian Christians” has been named one of the top spiritual books of 2008 by Spirituality and Practice. Here is a link to a review: <http://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/books/features.php?id=18256>

***If there is news that you wish to have shared with others in the Southeast Conference family, please contact Tim at [tdowns@secucc.org](mailto:tdowns@secucc.org).***

*Posted on January 20, 2009*

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1330 West Peachtree Street, Suite 350, Atlanta, GA 30309  
Office: 800.807.1993, Fax: 404.607.7939